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TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQI TURKMEN CULTURAL AND SOLIDARITY ASSOC.  
COMPLAINS ABOUT TAL IN LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH

1. (SBU) On March 17, two representatives of the Iraqi Turkmen Cultural and Solidarity Association, Abbas Turkmen and Tahsin Saaci, called on PolMilOff to deliver a letter to President Bush (text at para 3) complaining about Iraq's Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), and said their main concern was that the Iraqi Kurds would use the TAL to create a "fait accompli" in the Kurds' favor that discriminated against the Iraqi Turkmen. They claimed there were between 3.5 and 4 million Turkmen in Iraq (the highest figure we have ever heard), mostly in Kirkuk, and that over the past year Iraqi Turkmen always assisted and supported coalition forces. They said they expected equality and democracy but neither civilian nor military administrators were responding positively to their expectations. They said the Kirkuk City Council was disproportionately Kurdish with Turkmen underrepresented. They urged that a thorough census be conducted, but cautioned that the Iraqi Governing Council would not be capable of conducting such a census impartially. PolMilOff went through the TAL with them, explaining that the document represented a compromise in which everyone got something they wanted but no one got all they wanted. The Turkmen reps were pleased with the discussion and the chance to express their concerns. They left saying they would focus on the future and work to engage Iraqi Turkmen in the upcoming elections and constitutional process.

2. (U) The same letter was publicly presented by multiple reps of the same organization to the Consulate General in Istanbul on March 17. The Iraqi Turkmen there were accompanied by a large local media presence.

3. (U) Begin text of letter:

His Excellency, President George Bush

President of the United States of America.

Your Excellency:

The transitional constitution of Iraq is a promising event for a civilized move to a democratic government for Iraq. We appreciate the efforts of the Coalition Forces in the establishment of the pillars of a democratic and civilized government in our country. However the law contains many contradictions, the first contradiction in our opinion is the consideration of both Arabic and Kurdish as the two official languages of the country. The Turcoman citizens, the third ethnic group after the Arabs and Kurds, feel that Article 12 of the law that recognizes the equality of the Iraqi citizens regardless of their gender, opinion, creed, ethnicity, religion, sector or national origin in the eyes of the law and prohibits discrimination against Iraqi citizens in accordance to the International Proclamation of Human Rights contradicts and rejects this acceptance.

The second contradiction is that the law is recognizing the legitimacy of the region of Kurdistan as having a national assembly, a council of ministers and judicial regional authority for the Kurds, where as it prohibits granting the same rights to other Iraqi citizens. In spite of the fact that the law has granted the administrative, cultural and political rights of the Turcoman and Chaldo-assyrians, the sovereignty principle has been granted only to the Arabs and Kurds, as stated in Article 9 of the law thus prohibiting other Iraqi citizens from enjoying the same rights.

The Turcoman citizens of Iraq like to voice their concern on continuation of the policies of oppression and hegemony dictated by some of the articles of the law and constitution. Article 27 for example states that the formation of armed

forces or militias not under the direct control of the leadership of the Iraqi government is prohibited. However, Article 54 permits the government of the region of Kurdistan to control Police, and internal security forces.

The Turcoman citizens also fear the imposed migration of large numbers of Kurdish militia (peshmerge) to the areas where Turcoman live such as Kirkuk, Alton Kopru, Tuz and districts surrounding these areas. The Kurdish militia intends to create a new demographical pattern that favors their own ulterior motives, particularly concerning Article 58, which delineates the final status of the city of Kirkuk.

Further, the current law has ignored the Iraqi government's commitment of 1932, which was a precondition for acceptance of Iraq into the international community and League of Nations. The commitment admitted that the Turcoman constituted the majority of the inhabitants of Kirkuk and Kifri and accepted the adoption of the Turcoman language in litigation. Furthermore, the obligation stated in Article 30 which granted a fair representation for the Turcoman in the Iraqi General Assembly, is incredible, and the methodology of this practice has not been incorporated into the current law. The Turcoman citizens fear that issue of legitimizing of the Turcoman marginal representation in the government's administration as has actually happened in the current governance council shall be the practice of the future applications.

The Turcoman citizens hereby appeal to the government of the United States and your Excellency to help in solving these problems and granting a fair representation equal to other basic ethnic groups in the Republic of Iraq.

Sincerely,  
Abbas Turkmen

End text of letter.  
EDELMAN